

The Desert Whispers

from Johnson Valley



NEIGHBORHOOD HAPPENINGS

by Aileen De Victoria

March came in like a lion with rains, wind and snow flurries, resulting in the absence of our usual friends and neighbors. Best wishes to Oscar Baumgard for a speedy recovery in Loma Linda Hospital at the time of the report. Guests of Earle and Bea Roush were Gerald Reed and his wife and son, from Wilmington.

Mrs. Marion Paden enjoyed a visit with her brother and his wife, the Overtons, in Stockton. Mr. and Mrs. Louis Ross and Mr. and Mrs. Harry Gordon checking on their recently acquired cabins and planning additions, painting and enjoying the desert.

Dan and Eva Jarvis spent a few days this month with Eva's sister, Ethel Casey, in Congress, Arizona. Ruby Piner was stranded at her daughter's home in Claremont during the storm. The need to be evacuated threatened, but did not materialize, fortunately.

Local teen-agers were treated to a trip to Big Bear for snow fun, by the Landers Church.

Local CB radio owners who had their radios on between 11 p.m. and 1 a.m., during a night early this month, were treated to unscheduled entertainemnt. A certain threesome was learning the Dirty Boogie and the Limbo, unaware that the mike button was to "on." It was reported that the button was permanently disonnected the next day.

Sylvia, Jerry and Jess Bettles drove up from Pasadena in a new VW camper. They plan a trip to Oregon in April.

A new Moose Lodge has been formed in Lucerne Valley. Grand opening was March 22, at the Dome, with a well-attended dinner.

-- A. D.V.

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DIME A DIP SATURDAY
ELECTION OF OFFICERS

A dime-a-dip at 5:30 p.m., precedes the April 5 meeting of the Johnson Valley Improvement Association.

Election of officers will be held at the regular JVIA meet at 7:30. Nominations will be given by the nominating committee headed by Elmer Jacobs. Nominations from the floor will also be received.

Mrs. Gus Valentine is in charge of the dinner. She requests members to bring their favorite dish. Coffee and soft drinks will be available.

Proceeds from the dinner will be used for community projects. Construction of a kitchen for the Community Hall is one of the association goals. The new rest rooms must also be completed with interior finish.

President Alex Chernoff named Bill Jones to the visitation committee of the Welfare, Recreation and Education Council, which is chaired by Mrs. Charles Breese.

Elmer Jacobs was named finance chairman for a fund raising project to involve a ticket sale and drawing for an appliance or other valuable item to be determined.

A continuing art display will enhance the community hall, with work of local artists and association members to be exhibited. Frances Evans is in charge of the project.

The March meeting was closed in memory of Mrs. Alters.

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JVIA BOARD MEET

A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE JOHNSON VALLEY IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION HAS BEEN CALLED FOR 2 P.M., APRIL 5 IN THE COMMUNITY HALL. PRESIDENT ALEX CHERNOFF URGES OFFICERS TO ATTEND.

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DIME-A-DIP 5:30 p.m.
Election of officers 7:30 p.m.

APRIL 5 APRIL 5 APRIL 5

SEARCH AND RESCUE TO MEET

The Johnson Valley Search and Rescue group will meet at 6 p.m. on April 12 at Burl Moore's.

Visitors are always welcome, according to the announcement.

A master first aid kit has been purchased and added to the growing stock of supplies and equipment, at Chisel Inn.

A second kit is to be provided and stored at the other end of the valley at the Roush residence.

SHOUTS AND WHISPERS

Betty and Carl Krohn are among the busiest hosts in the Valley. Recent guests have included Dr. and Mrs. Frank Bishop, from Palmdale. Also son Karl Krohn and his wife Lynn, and children, Rachele and David.

Coming up from Long Beach were Byrle and Jack Waller, and Velma and Clyde Strickland, and from Tucson, Arizona, Helen and Fred Dail.

The Krohns hosted Clarence Estes on his birthday, with guests including Gus and Agnes Valentine with Flossie and Clarence. The Estes reciprocated on Carl's birthday.

The George Farmers spent their first weekend in their new Johnson Valley home. Welcome!

Audrey Brown, daughter of Marie Stanley, recovering after another bout with illness. Marie's son, Charles Brundle also home after suffering a possible heart attack. Best to you both.

Visitors from Illinois were welcomed by the Robert Peters. Mr. Peter's mother, and a nephew and his wife, were among the guests.

SOMETHING MORE

More good intentions
Come to nought,
Unless brought to fruition
By effort and thought.

Contributed

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DESERT EARS EXTENDS INVITATION

All citizens band radio operators are invited to join Desert Ears CQ Club members for a pot luck the second Sunday of each month.

Lunch at noon precedes the 1 p.m. meeting in Landers Association Hall. Bob Forster is president.

Next meeting is scheduled for April 13.

The annual Steak Fry will be held on Labor Day weekend in the Landers Hall, it was announced.

Successful March event sponsored by the group was the dime-a-dip, with Mrs. Forster, Mrs. Eva Hibbard and Mrs. Buzzard in charge. Door prize winners were Stan Walker, John Kee and Mrs. Chris Sweitzer.

A mobile antenna and other items were auctioned by Cecil McGee, finance chairman.

PINOCHLE ANYONE?

Edna Hodges and Marie Stanley hosted the Knuckleheads this month. The new pinochle club invites women to join the group. Games are played at members' homes.

ROADS

The Johnson Valley Improvement Association is spearheading a movement to provide road signs in strategic locations for the convenience of visitors and residents.

Roads will be named and will be included on future county maps. Residents are urged to work together in naming roads not yet designated, or in deciding on names where conflict has arisen. The goal is to have uniform names across the valley. Some existing roads have separate names in the Timico or the Grandview areas.

Timico names were selected several years ago and will be continued where possible. The streets were named for desert flora and fauna.

Al Smith, vice president of JVIA, is in charge of the mapping and can be contacted for details.

The Association is also accepting contributions for road maintenance, with Gus Valentine authorized to receive funds.

A map of existing street names can be seen at the Association hall on Larrea Road. Progress reports on the project will be given at regular association meetings, to which the public is always welcome, according to Alex Chernoff, JVIA president.

THE CREOSOTE

Most widespread of the strictly desert plants is the creosote bush. It's the big scraggly bush you see everywhere.

The creosote bush has waxy leaves which prevent excessive evaporation. The bush is named for the odor of the leaves, according to Norman Hammond Wakeman, in his "Southwest Desert Wonderland."

The leaves are olive green when there is sufficient moisture, but when drought comes, change to brownish green, as the leaves shrivel to reduce the evaporation surface. If drought continues, the leaves drop off.

The roots of the creosote reach out over a wide area to extract moisture from the soil. The bushes are usually far apart and evenly spaced, but scientists do not agree on the reason for this, Dr. Wakeman points out.

Some are working on a hypothesis that the bush creates a chemical which prevents seeds of their own and of other plants from germinating near them.

Others believe it is simply that the first plant in an area takes most of the moisture.

Along paved roads, where moisture tends to accumulate and run off the edges, the creosote bushes are not spaced and even tend to crowd one another, Dr. Wakeman points out.

The creosote is not successfully transplanted, he adds.

There is evidence of chemical warfare between plants, according to Life's "The Desert". The creosote bush is very common on the Argentine desert.

The creosote is useful in providing perches, shade and food for desert animals, and ties down the soil from eroding water and wind. The sand hummocks thus formed are used as home sites by the ground squirrels, kangaroo rats, lizards, snakes and toads.

The creosote is not the source of the chemical from wood tar.

Many of us have been calling the creosote "greasewood," which apparently is erroneous, as according to the dictionary, the name greasewood applies generally to a group of desert plants.

LOCAL POLLING PLACE SOUGHT

Efforts are continuing to obtain a polling place in Johnson Valley, possibly at the Community Hall.

A petition is being circulated among registered voters, asking the county to establish the voting place.

Alex Chernoff is a deputy registrar of voters in Johnson Valley.

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COMING OF AGE

A man does not begin to grow up until he stops tearing others down.

Cpl. George J. Nowicki
Is Awarded Air Medal

Marine Cpl. George J. Nowicki, son of the Paul P. Nowickis, has been awarded the Air Medal while serving with Marine Light Helicopter Squadron 367 in Vietnam.

He received the award for meritorious achievement in aerial combat missions over South Vietnam.

Based at the Phu Bai Air Base, his squadron operates two versions of the UH-1E Huey helicopter - the "slick" and the "gunship."

The gunship is armed with multiple machine guns and 2.75-inch rockets, and is used for armed escort of transport helicopters, and suppression of enemy fire in contested landing zones. The slick is unarmed.

* * * * *

ANNUAL VISIT FROM BISHOP QUINN

Father Patrick J. Scanlan, pastor of St. Paul's Catholic Church, Lucerne Valley, announces that an important event of the year has taken place.

This was the Visitation of his Excellency, Bishop John Quinn, assistant Bishop of San Diego with its far-extending territory from the Mexican border to Blythe, Needles and Trona. The formal visit was to examine the books, observe the fulfillment of all new laws of the Church, and to offer suggestions for improvement of church activities.

The Bishop expressed himself pleased with all he saw and heard, Fr. Scanlan said.

The Bishop was especially pleased with the efforts of the people to carry on congregational singing during services, and in this, St. Paul's holds prior place among surrounding Catholic churches where trained choirs do most of the singing.

Fr. Scanlan expressed regret that a threatening storm kept Johnson Valley residents from attending the service.

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CONTRIBUTORS' COLUMN

LOVE AND PEACE

By Monique LeDean, 14-year-old daughter of Al and Bernice Burkett, of Johnson Valley

If love and peace is all around,
Why can it not be found.
War and hate is here right now.
Is it too late to stomp it down?
Here I sit meditating with my mind rapid
fading,

Tried to love. But only hate came to
mind in this state.

What is wrong and what is right?
Should we love or should we fight?

God, please show us the light.
Even in the darkness of the night.
The Eagle has claws, why can't we find
that out,

And fight for the cause that war is about.

THE OLD HORNED TOAD

It looks as though I can come out from under my rock without water wings for a change. Greenery has popped up all over, fore-telling great carpets of color to come.

* * *

No news on water at the moment, but we'll have further reports as soon as possible.

* * *

The Desert Whispers is being sent this month to about 20 readers who have not renewed their subscriptions. This is a reminder for those who may have forgotten. We don't expect 100 per cent renewal, but the response has been great, and many have included comments and suggestions.

So far the bulk mailing has not been a tremendous success. Delivery has been slower than anticipated. If it does not work out we'll drop it, and sacrifice the permit fee.

It looks as though we may go to off-set printing, first class mailing, and subscription price of \$4 a year. How about it? Comments please!

* * *

STATISTICS - A five gallon water bottle dropped from a speeding delivery truck will cover an area fifty feet long and fifteen feet wide. Largest shards are about three by five inches. It takes 27 minutes to sweep up a five gallon water bottle.

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The Desert Whispers from Johnson Valley is published the last Saturday of the month. Subscriptions \$2 a year.

Mailing Address:
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Sierra Madre, Calif. 91024

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Vol. 2 No. 7 March 29, 1969.
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RANGER PATROL URGED

The California Advisory Board to the U.S. Bureau of Land Management is urging the immediate establishment of a ranger patrol in the California desert.

The board is asking Congress to pass laws making it possible to subject law-breakers to fines up to \$500 and/or six months in jail.

The government finds it difficult to prosecute persons who trespass, litter and damage and destroy natural resources in violation of existing laws.

It is also recommended that a program be formulated to "wipe the books clean" of fraudulent mining claims.

"Fraudulent mining claims located by opportunists and land speculators are contaminating the desert," the board reported.

Board members agreed with the recommendations and concepts of the Bureau of Land Management's recently completed desert study - the first step in a master plan for the Southern California desert.

"The California Desert Study", a 377-page report, with photographs and maps, was prepared jointly by the Bureau of Land Management and the National Park Service under the supervision of James B. Ruch, assistant to the state director of the Bureau.

It covers national, scientific and economic values, geography climate and land ownership, and recreational uses, plus special sections on 19 areas suggested by the bureau to be set aside as special recreation lands.

The board recommended that the study be published by the State Department of Education, and be distributed to all schools and libraries in California.

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MORE NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES

Best wishes to Earl Roush, who underwent eye surgery Wednesday. Bea reports all is well.

* * *

Dean and Ruby Piner are busy keeping the welcome mat brushed off. They hosted Mr. and Mrs. Harry Gordon for Harry's first birthday in Johnson Valley.

Other visitors have been Ruby's sister and her husband, Mr. and Mrs. Merle Bruce, and their daughter and family, Mr. and Mrs. Tony Collins.

Also the Piner's daughter Joanne and her hubby, Bill.

-- A. D. V.

DIME A DIP 5:30 p.m. April 5
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CHURCH SERVICES

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Sunday Masses at 8 and 11 a.m.

Rev. Patrick J. Scanlan, Pastor

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Sunday School	9:30 a.m.
Worship . . .	11 a.m.
Evening Worship	6:30 p.m.
Hour of Power Wednesday	7 p.m.

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